

The Attic Monologues Episode 27 - There Is Method In't

CONTENT WARNINGS: Lying, existentialism; descriptions of body horror, mental breakdown, depression and mental health issues, dissociation; mentions of financial worries, imprisonment

[THEME MUSIC FADES IN.]

MORGAN

Planar Prod presents: The Attic Monologues.

Episode 27: There Is Method In't.

[THEME MUSIC RESOLVES.]

[MATCH FLARES, FLAME CATCHES. PEN SCRATCHING AGAINST PAPER.
OMINOUS HUMMING.]

THE AUTHOR

There is a girl who has been falling apart just as long as she has been put together.

No one has noticed.

She does not *seem* like a sidelines kind of character. She is sparklers on a winter night. Lemon sherbert on the tongue. A thousand cliché poems tattooed on her skin, without a single disingenuous bone in her body. Here is a girl who loves like her heart is in her eyes.

Her ribcage has been torn open for years. When you listen hard enough...
You can hear the wind... Whistling between her bones.

And she is falling apart. Vanishing, finger by finger, word by word.

You should have noticed by now. You'll never forgive yourself, when you finally do. *Listen* to the wind.

[A PAUSE, OMINOUS HUMMING CONTINUES.]

Haven't you realised it is getting louder, while she... Gets quieter? When was the last time you heard her laugh?

When was the last time you spoke to her at all?

There's still time, if only you'd listen.

But you won't.

You are not my protagonist because you listen. Or because you care. There are other things to attend to.

[OMINOUS HUMMING FADES, PEN SCRATCHING STOPS.]

Sometimes, though... Sometimes I wish you would.

[CANDLE BLOWN OUT.]

[PACING FOOTSTEPS, DISTANT TRAFFIC.].

NYX

What time is it?

BELLA

Seven twenty-four.

NYX

Okay cool. And we said-

BELLA

Seven. Don't worry, Nyxie. This is still early by our group's standards.

NYX

Right. Yeah. Okay, okay, okay-

BELLA

Nyxie. It's going to be fine.

NYX

Yeah! Sure! Totally fine!

BELLA

What's wrong?

NYX

I'm just- this doesn't stress you out?

BELLA

(*Exhales*) Which part? I'm always stressed.

NYX

I mean- *This!* The lying! We're going to have to *lie* to *our best friends*, Bells. We can't tell them about magic! We can't let them *anywhere* near this. I won't let that happen.

BELLA

Well then, it's... Simple. Just... Don't mention it. Talk around it.

NYX

Yeah, right, right, yeah... except, I have, like, no filter. You know this, Bells. I think it, I say it. There is nothing between the two.

BELLA

The best lies are mostly the truth. You don't have to- *lie*. You just have to leave out the magic. You were attacked by someone in the park, but they were taking out their anger on the wrong person. You couldn't leave your house for a week. You- You weren't doing well. You went to the library. You visited a market. You cut your hair.

NYX

Huh. Yeah. Okay. When you put it like that, it doesn't seem... So hard. I guess I could do that. It just feels... Icky.

BELLA

We... We could tell them the truth.

NYX

God, no! No way. I've already dragged you into this. I-I couldn't bear if something happened...

BELLA

It's not your fault.

NYX

Bells, if I wasn't the protagonist, you would be- finishing second year without having to worry about the fate of the whole bloody world. I think that makes it my fault. That only happened when you found out the truth, when we found out the truth. Ambrose and Athrie, they're in this because they knew what was going on. God knows who else has gotten trapped in my danger magnet field. Agatha, probably, and anyone else I've talked to in the last six months - Raven, Valentine, Sam, Iman. Ollie... Mum. But right now, they don't know anything, and they seem safe. For now. If there's any chance I can keep them that way, don't... I owe it to them to try? Seth and Lola, they're... Everything. They're family. I can't let them get hurt. But... I also can't just... Abandon them without explanation, y'know?

BELLA

(Shakily) Do you... Do you really believe that? That lying can be okay, in the right situation?

NYX

Like you said, it's not lying. It's... Bending the truth. If they ever need to know, I'll tell them, obviously.

BELLA

I... Nyx, I need to tell-

[DOORBELL RINGS.]

[FOOTSTEPS, DOOR SQUEAKING OPEN]

LOLA

My darlings! How long it's been! Oh how I've missed you! Do tell me how the war has treated you!

[FABRIC RUSTLING.]

NYX

It's not the war Lola, it's just university.

LOLA

Exactly! The intellectual war front is not to be trifled with, my dear Nyx.

NYX

How much coffee have you had?

LOLA

Just four! I think. One loses count of the shots.

SETH

It's eight shots. She's been like this all afternoon.

LOLA

(Gasps) Judgement! Thy name is Seth Entham!

SETH

So what if I am? I don't understand how you aren't vibrating out of your skin.

LOLA

Practice, I suppose.

SETH

Anyway, Nyx. Happy birthday.

LOLA

Yes!! Happy birthday!! I'm so glad you decided to do something in the end.
Not to be dramatic, but I was getting *concerned*.

NYX

Birthday? What day is it?

SETH

Nyx... It's the 6th of March. You're 20. Today?

NYX

Oh. Ah-huh. Happy birthday to me then!

SETH

Is this not a birthday party?

NYX

Oh, yeah! Totally it is. Guess my subconscious knew I needed to celebrate even if I wasn't keeping track of the days.

LOLA

I barely know what month we're in these days, you're all good. That just means you get a surprise celebration!

BELLA

Now all the cooking we did for this evening seems a bit... Stupid. We should've ordered in or something.

NYX

Are you kidding me?! Home-cooked is the best celebration. Also, in terms of money, I have no money. So this is good.

LOLA

I also come bearing cake.

NYX

See, Bella? She comes bearing cake! You can always count on Lola.

SETH

She'll be living off that compliment for the next year.

BELLA

Speaking of money, Lola- how's the Caramel and Clove treating you? I haven't um... Managed to catch up with Ambrose in a while.

LOLA

Oh... I quit.

NYX

You... quit?

LOLA

Yeah. On, like, day three.

NYX

Why?

LOLA

I just... Wasn't feeling it.

NYX

Oh. I mean, fair enough. Being a barista isn't for everyone. Um, what are you looking at next?

LOLA

Oh, nothing.

SETH

Nothing?

LOLA

(*Sighing*) Yeah, y'know, nothing's really clicking with me right now. I got a bunch of job offers back but none of them were really my vibe. I know I don't want to go to uni, at least. I could *not* sit in a classroom after two years of freedom.

NYX

So you're just, like... Taking a break?

LOLA

I suppose. I tried a couple shifts at my dad's restaurant, just like when they have a busy day or they're short staffed. But mostly a break.

BELLA

What do you do all day?

LOLA

Sleep, mostly. Uh, go on long, rambling walks in the park. Draw- Or, doodle, really. Take ridiculously long baths- like, three hours minimum. Listen to the wind and the trees. I'm like one of those Victorian maidens sent to the seaside for their health.

SETH

They were usually suffering from lead or arsenic poisoning.

LOLA

Well, not *precisely* like a Victorian maiden, I guess, but let me live in the aesthetic.

BELLA

The aesthetic...?

LOLA

Besides, it's not like I *need* to worry about rent at the moment. My dad's won't kick me out until I'm ready to find my feet. And they get free childcare out of it for my brothers, so. Win win.

[FOOTSTEPS.]

LOLA cont.

Anyway... Oooh, what's this?

[METAL RATTLING.]

LOLA cont.

It looks so old! I didn't know either of you was into vintage tech, or is it Sam's? My dad would love this.

[SWITCH FLIPS, FEEDBACK FUZZ.]

???

(Overlapping, indistinct, echoing) Come away, o human child, said the wind.
Thy head is weary and thy body breaking down. One step, then another-

???

(Overlapping, indistinct, echoing) Come away, o human child, said the wind.
There are too many steps now in this dance you call life. One step, then another-

[SWITCH FLIPS, VOICES AND FEEDBACK CUT OFF.]

NYX

Oh- uh, don't- that's- broken. It's just, random noise. Don't worry about it. I found it at, like, this second hand store in Acton? It tunes into random stations, I can't get it to do anything properly, uh... But it looks cool, right?
(Laughs)

LOLA

Uh, sure.

So, Nyx! Why don't you read us one of your monologues? I miss hearing you read creepy things to us. And surely nothing can get us in the birthday mood like a good performance! Maybe another fire one, or maybe the sea, or-
(Gasps) One about forests! You've got to have some scary trees in there, right?

NYX

I don't- I don't know if that's the greatest idea...

LOLA

But you love reading monologues! Pretty please, Nyx, it would be the highlight of a very terrible week.

NYX

What happened?

LOLA

Oh, nothing, really. Just- Maisie. Nothing happened with Maisie. I don't want to talk about it.

NYX

Okay. I, uh, I guess I can. Just, like, a short one, or something.

BELLA

Nyx, can I talk to you for a sec?

NYX

Yeah, yeah, sure!

[FOOTSTEPS]

BELLA

(Whispering) Are you really going to-

NYX

(Whispering) I can't exactly say no!

BELLA

(Whispering) I mean, you *can*-

NYX

(Whispering) You know what I mean! When someone asks for something I can't just, like, *say no*. Oh, don't look at me like that, you're even worse than me. Don't you remember the time Mike Charlton asked to cheat off you in Year 8 Computing and you just, like, said yes? And then you both got detention!

BELLA

(Whispering) Mike Charlton was really tall and on the rugby team! This is *Lola*. She'll understand.

NYX

(*Whispering*) What, you want me to just say, "So sorry, Lolo, but I'm afraid I'm just not comfortable reading this monologue in front of friends, let alone in public. You see, it's actually the soul of a human being who's been trapped inside the paper by a capricious and malevolent all-seeing god who specifically wants to hurt *me*. Also, I'm the protagonist of a probable tragedy and just by being in this room you've most likely gone and gotten some horrific role like "That Girl in the First Five Minutes of a Horror Movie". Does that sound good to you, Bella?

BELLA

(*Whispering*) Well, no, but- just say you don't feel up to it.

NYX

(*Whispering*) Lola's having a shit week, and she says this will make her feel better. Who am I to take it from her?

BELLA

(*Whispering*) You... Are... Too... Nice.

NYX

(*Whispering*) Not famously one of my character traits.

BELLA

(*Whispering*) Too willing to compromise.

NYX

(*Whispering*) Now that, I'll take.

[FOOTSTEPS.]

LOLA

Did you *lovebirds* have fun without us?

BELLA

We were just- Discussing a surprise for later!

SETH

I feel like it's supposed to be the other way around today.

LOLA

Ah- Don't be a spoilsport, Seth. I love surprises! Say no more!

NYX

Anyway, I need to find a monologue to, like, get the right vibes for today. Are you sure this will really make you feel better, Lola? The monologues aren't exactly happy.

LOLA

Watching fictional people be sad and afraid is, like, cathartic.

NYX

Right. Yeah. Fictional. I'll... Be back in a sec.

[FOOTSTEPS]

SETH

Bella! How are you doing?

BELLA

Me? I'm fine.

SETH

You're sure? Last time we saw you, things were-

LOLA

Nyx was about to pop the question.

SETH

Lola!

LOLA

What!? She knows which question I mean.

BELLA

We were, kind of, interrupted. Life's a bit on hold right now, until things settle down.

LOLA

Oh god, do I have to have the A Levels slash university slash promotion conversation with you, too?

BELLA

The- The what?

SETH

What Lola means to say is, we're glad you guys are communicating your need for taking it slow, because it's still more communication than you had before. And we're proud of you.

LOLA

I don't think that's at all what I meant. It is, in fact, quite the literal opposite of the A Levels slash university slash Promotion speech.

BELLA

We'll get back to it, Lola. I promise. Just, for now... We want to be a bit more stable. Before we let anything happen. There's time.

LOLA

Until there isn't.

SETH

Lola-

[FOOTSTEPS, PAPER FLUTTERING.]

NYX

I found one! Creepy forests, just like you wanted.

LOLA

Brilliant! Give it to us, I'm so ready.

NYX

Okay, then... this is Lila Gravett, a lost soul seeking purpose. (CLEARS
THROAT)

NYX as LILA GRAVETT

It begins with a dream of nails scratching against a wooden door. That same dream every child must have, of a door they have seen in their house, or their school. A door that is always locked.

Everything in their imagination is behind that door, caught like a hook.

[OMINOUS HUMMING BUILDS.]

NYX cont.

Most children grow up. Most children become the adults that lock those doors from young prying eyes. Most children forget how to dream, the ability stripped from them by the turning wheel.

But some children... Some let everything else be taken first. Some will forget everything except that door, that anchor, that hook to their childhood of wonder and fear. They poured all their imagination behind it for safekeeping, and are ready to collect what they are owed.

Some children come back without the key, but nothing left to lose.

The door is no longer the cupboard under the stairs, or the place where the school cleaning supplies are kept. Oh, it looks the same, of course. Peeling paint, fire engine red or bone white. A slight groove in the base from the wear of twenty years of shoes kicking it open.

But the door has moved. It is outside now. Freestanding in a field. Embedded in rocks. Lodged in the bark of a tree trunk, surrounded by a forest you recognise but have never visited.

And the trees there... Know your name.

You think the world might be ending, the first time they call out to you.

The first thing you feel is relief. The wind, the trees, the world... *Something* knows you. Something remembers you exist. Something has noticed the way your body is becoming a shadow, the way your feet forget to leave footprints in the dirt.

You have forgotten what it is to be seen, and at first, the feeling burns away skin, flesh, sinew. It bleaches out bones, makes every fogged up thought and awful, crystalline thing.

It is patient, this forest, this tree. Or at least, it tries to be. The trees have always found the concept of flesh time hard to understand. They count days like seconds, years like hours. They understand that, truly, all they have to do is wait. You'll find a way through that door, whether by force or as your essence rots into the ground.

But the trees also want to be kind. They want to give you the gift of everything you left behind that door. They remember magic, true magic. They remember give and take.

They are tired of giving only to the dead. A corpse cannot wonder.

You know this intimately. You have felt like one for years.

Things happened, in between. You aren't sure when you became the ghost haunting your own skin. You went to university, at some point. You don't remember it, not fully. A hundred faces, a hundred conversations, the same each time. Where are you from? What course are you doing? Where's your accommodation? Alcohol and sleepless nights and thousands upon thousands of words through your fingers... No wonder the time slips through them.

But you were there. You graduated. You got a job, you have a job, most likely. You go to work, but what do you do there?

You come home, you cook dinner. You do not remember what you have eaten for each meal, how exactly you got from Point A to Point B. But you did, you must've. Money in your bank account goes down and up each

month, never enough, never for long. Your apartment is clean enough that no one complains- when you remember to let them in.

In the corner of your mind, the trees grow louder. The door rattles. Your stability is growing thin.

[WIND WHISPERING.]

NYX cont.

You knew, as a child, not to open that door.

No matter how much the curiosity chewed you apart at night, no matter how many times the dream visited you. You knew that everything would change. Your world was already a taped up mirror, your footsteps were already so quiet. You could not bear the idea of change.

The trees knew this. They have always known. It is why they chose you in the first place. Wouldn't it be nice, they see you think, if I could rest? If I didn't have to choose? If I could bury my bones at the crossroads, instead of dragging my flesh down a single path?

You weren't ready to admit to any of this, when you were young. You still believed the rules didn't apply to you. There are only so many hours in the day, and you are only human, but you thought that if you just kept moving, you would never have to face it.

The trees knew that, too.

Now, you are tired. Your bones are worn to dust. You are still walking forward, but now the dream comes to you even when awake. That door of your childhood hovers in your thoughts.

[WIND WHISPERING.]

NYX cont.

Reminds you of the way it made you feel so many things, whether good or bad. It whispers of the trees, which offer you purpose, and a place to fall.

You have forgotten so many things, in the haze of your exhaustion. Your childhood best friend's laugh. The colour of your own eyes. The way your body looks in the mirror.

Most of all, you have forgotten your fear. Your body is so saturated with it, every moment of the day. You are turning numb. You have forgotten the difference between the life threatening and the mundane.

[WIND WHISPERING.]

NYX cont.

You have forgotten why you ever feared the concept of change.

The trees call your name. The mirror cracks. Your footsteps are a thunderstorm.

You open the door, and walk into the embrace of branches and roots.

You'll be happy here, just as I am. I promise.

[WIND WHISPERING.]

NYX cont.

You'll never have to choose - what to have for dinner each night, whether food or electricity is more important. You'll never have to wonder if your existence is worth anything at all.

[WIND GROWING LOUDER.]

NYX cont.

Here, we feed the trees. We feed the world. We bask in the sun and the twilight and the wind.

Just start walking.

[WIND AND OMINOUS HUMMING FADES.]

[DISTANT TRAFFIC NOISES FADE BACK IN.]

NYX

So, uh, there you have it! The vibes, and all that stuff. Should we watch a movie or something?

BELLA

Yes! A uh- a movie sounds like a good idea.

SETH

Please don't make us watch Much Ado About Nothing again.

NYX

It is my *birthday*, Seth. You're saying I can't watch my favourite movie on my birthday?

SETH

Well, no, but it is, like, five hours long.

NYX

That is factually a lie.

BELLA

How about the Percy Jackson movie?

NYX

That is literally no fun for anyone unless you're incredibly wasted.

SETH

What about Stardust?

NYX

Ooh, I can always watch Stardust. Yeah, let's do it! Oh, but first, please, let's get food. I can *not* take sword fighting to the Cancan seriously while I'm hangry.

[TRAFFIC NOISES FADE OUT.]

[THEME MUSIC FADES IN.]

MORGAN

Thank you so much for listening to The Attic Monologues. If you're enjoying our show, please consider supporting us through our Patreon or Ko-fi, to help us compensate the hard work our team puts into every episode. You can find links in the shownotes below. Alternately, you can leave us a review, whisper to the wind, or tell enemies, love interests, and friends alike to listen.

This episode was written by Morgan Greensmith, and produced by Morgan Greensmith, LM Clohessy, and Sorren Briarwood. It was directed and script edited by LM Clohessy. The sound design is by Isaac Thompson and the theme tune was composed by Wilkie Morrison.

In this episode you heard the voices of:

ATLAS

Atlas Morgan as Nyx Ryland.

BONNIE

Bonnie Caldweood-Aspinwall as Bella Crow.

ROYA

Roya Gharbi as Lola Brodeur.

CRY MJ

Cry MJ as Seth Entham

MORGAN

MJ Scott and Cerise Angela as Radio Voices.

ALASDAIR

Alasdair Stuart as the Author.

MORGAN

The logo was designed by Sorren Briarwood. The social media is also run by Sorren Briarwood. You can find us on Twitter @AtticMonologues, and on Instagram, Tumblr, Facebook and TikTok @TheAtticMonologues. For more information on our show, our crew, our policies and other shows made by our people, visit our website www.planarprod.com.

Episode 28: What's In A Name will be out Wednesday December 6th. See you then!

[DOOR OPENING. FOOTSTEPS. WIND RUSHING.]

LOLA

What do you want from me?

[WIND GROWING LOUDER.]

???

Come away...

[SOUND FADES.]

MORGAN

Today's episode features a trailer for Warlock, a DND-inspired audiodrama following one girl's quest to discover the origins of her mysterious magical powers. With incredible worldbuilding and characters, we know fans of The Attic Monologues will love this. So without further ado, Warlock...

[ADVENTUROUS MUSIC FADES IN.]

NOVA

If you love anime and DND, check out Warlock. It's the story of me, Nova Ravenwood, a young woman without magic who forms a pact with a mysterious being for power. Set in a world of dragons, adventure, and powerful sorcerers, the story unfolds like an anime for your ears.

RIN

And don't forget about her muscular hunk of a classmate: me, Rin! Too bad this is audio only, or you could see that I'm flexing my arms off over here.

BRIAR

Are you seriously interrupting the ad? You moron! Sorry, we'll get out of your way.

RIN

Wait-wait-wait-wait-wait! Hang on! I haven't even told them about my amazing powers! I guess I should describe myself a little more first. First thing, I don't wear a shirt... [VOICE FADING.]

[DOOR CLOSSES.]

NOVA

(*Calling*) Thanks Briar! Join the quest, and listen to Warlock wherever you get your podcasts, or visit warlockpod.com for more information!

